Presentation Draft Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Plan Update

February 21, 2011



Presentation Overview

- Welcome
- Project and Process Overview
- Draft Plan Overview
- Next Steps
- Initial Feedback/Input



Project Purpose and Goals

- Keep as much of the County's current program,
 created in the 70s and refined in 1999, as practical
- Adapt Jefferson County's agricultural preservation program to meet new State "Working Lands" law
- Consider other policy refinements in response to emerging land use and economic issues
- Get an updated, State-certified agricultural preservation plan and ordinance by the end of 2011



Key Features of "Working Lands"

- Agricultural Enterprise Areas (AEAs)
 - Priority areas for continuation of agricultural use
 - Provides opportunity to increase tax credit
- Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easements (PACE)
 - Encourages/supports voluntary local PACE programs
 - Provides up to \$12 million in state grants/year
- Farmland Preservation Planning/Zoning Program
 - Focus of Agricultural Preservation of Land Use Plan Update



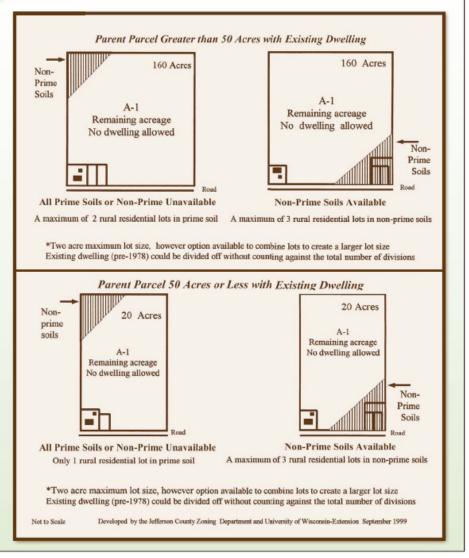
1999 Ag Preservation & Land Use Plan



Current Farmland Preservation Planning & Zoning Approach

- A vast majority of land under County zoning jurisdiction is zoned A-1 Exclusive Agriculture
- No new homes allowed in the A-1 district, except for replacements of existing homes
- For new homes to be built, new lots must be created and rezoned from A-1 to the A-3 Rural Residential District
- · Key definitions to understand rezoning/land division policies:
 - Parent parcel—all contiguous A-1 zoned property under the same ownership
 - Prime agricultural land—all Class 1 and Class 2 soils, plus Class 3 soils with Class 1 or 2 characteristics
 - Existing home—a pre-1978 house on parent parcel, which can be divided without counting against totals
- Over non-prime agricultural land, no more than 3 residential lots may be divided from the parent parcel
- Over prime agricultural land, no more than 1 or 2 residential lots may be divided, depending on parent parcel size (see graphic)
- Maximum new residential lot size is 2 acres, with possible lot combinations for larger lots on non-prime agricultural lands (e.g., one 6-acre lot instead of three 2-acre lots)
- · Recommended clustering and no further division of lots
- Remaining A-1 acreage restricted against any further development
- · No greater than 1 house per 10 acres if within environmental corridor
- Opportunities for higher densities in limited areas so designated in town and county comprehensive plans







Plan Update Process Overview

- Spring/Summer 2010:
 - Meetings of Steering Committee
 - Development and review of 4 different program scenarios
- Fall 2010:
 - Committee direction on preferred program scenario (B)
 - Prepare first draft of Plan document and maps
- 2011:
 - Discuss and refine draft Plan
 - Prepare revised zoning ordinance text and zoning map
 - Obtain various approvals of Plan and ordinance



Draft Plan Overview

- Meets the State's required content
- Uses 1999 County Plan and local comprehensive plans prepared since then as foundation
- Will replace 1999 County Plan of same name
- Shows proposed policy differences with "NEW" labels
- Will be used to guide zoning changes and decisions
- Provides a framework for farmland preservation in Jefferson County that extends beyond regulations



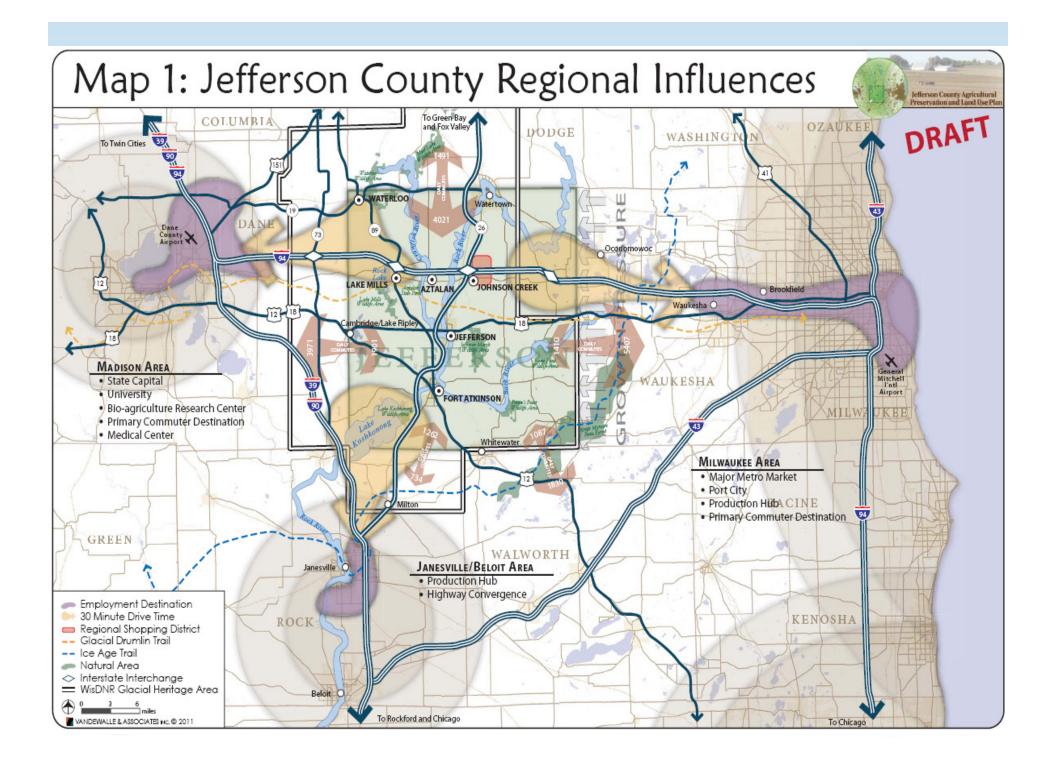


FIGURE A: JEFFERSON COUNTY Farmland Preservation Model



Jefferson County Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Plan

This is a conceptual model representing how Jefferson County endeavors to preserve farmland, support farming, and grow its agricultural economy. The model includes three factors—land use, economics, and incentives. Under each of the three factors are several initiatives that the County is undertaking or supporting. These initiatives are described in detail within the Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Plan document and other components of the Jefferson County Comprehensive Plan.

LAND USE

- Farmland preservation planning areas and zoning
- Rezoning policy for A-3 lots
- Long range urban service areas
- · Limited service areas
- Rural hamlets
- Environmental corridors
- Glacial Heritage Area

ECONOMICS

- Commercial agriculture
- Niche agriculture and organics
- Food processing
- Bioenergy

INCENTIVES

- Farmland preservation tax credits
- Agricultural enterprise areas (AEAs)
- Purchase of agricultural conservation easements (PACE)
- Nutrient management and land conservation planning support

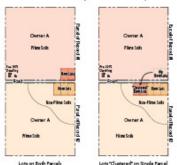
FIGURE B: JEFFERSON COUNTY FARMLAND PRESERVATION LAND USE PLANNING AND ZONING APPROACH DRAFT



New Development and Land Configuration

- New homes require rezoning from A-1 to A-3 and payment of conversion fee.
- Each A-1 parcel of record is allowed at least one A-3 lot, regardless of size.
- 35 acre minimum lot size in A-1 district, except as conditional use.
- · 1 acre minimum residential lot size.
- 2 acre maximum residential lot size (except larger lots allowed with use of more splits).
- Clustering of new residential lots recommended.
- Modify list of agricultural-related business uses in A-2 district to enable certification as a farmland preservation zoning district, thereby eliminating conversion fee for A-1 rezones to A-2 district.

Siting Approach for Parcels in Same Ownership Divided by Road

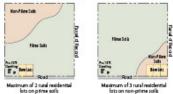


- Parcels under common ownership divided only by a road are treated as separate parcels for the purpose of determining the number of allowable A-3 lots.
- Total number of allowable lots may be shifted between the 2 parcels of record, with County and Town approval.

Approach for Allowing New Housing

Parcel of Record Greater than 50 Acres with Existing Dwelling
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Non-Print Skib. Accessible



Parcel of Record Less than 50 Acres with Existing D welling
No-Prins Soblaccesble or All Prins Seb. Ne-Prins Seb Acres ble





 From each "parcel of record" as it existed on February 8, 2000, no more than 3 new residences may be built on non-prime soils, and no more than 2 new residences on prime soils (on parcels 50 acres or less, no more than 1 on prime soils), subtracting any previous splits from the "parent parcel" as it existed on December 13, 1977.

Approach to Older Houses via Farm Consolidation



- Retain prior farm consolidation lots in A-1 zoning (with no conversion fee).
- Allow 1-5 acre land divisions for residences built before January 15, 1975 by requiring a rezoning to A-3 and payment of conversion fee. Does not count against maximum 1-3 splits as indicated above.

Agricultural Land Preservation

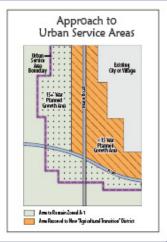
- Prime farmland soils defined as all NRCS Class 1 and Class 2 soils, plus Class 3 soils with Class 1 or 2 characteristics.
- Active Purchase of Conservation Easements (PACE) program with help from State matching grants.
- · Support future Agricultural Enterprise Areas (AEA) applications.
- Maintain County GIS tracking system with slight modifications to meet State reporting requirements; may require recorded affidavit to track "frozen" parent parcels.

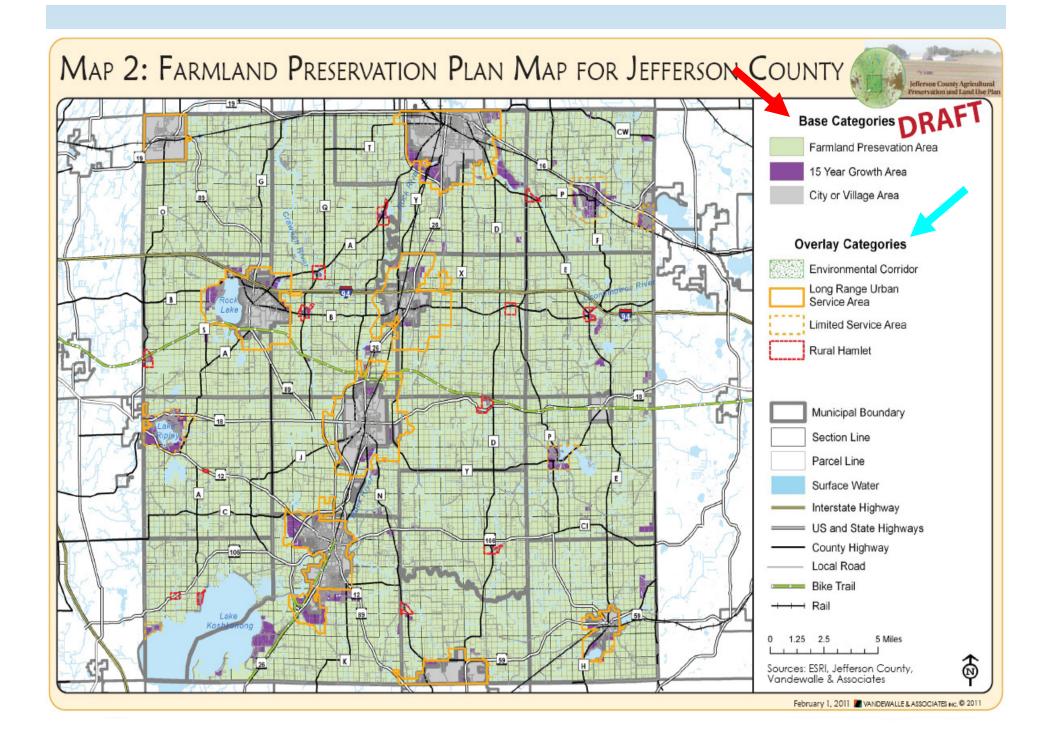
Natural Resource Preservation

- Maximum of one home per 10 acres within environmental corridor.
- Modify Natural Resource zoning district to be certified as a farmland preservation district, or to become an overlay district, (no conversion fee for A-1 rezones to NR district.)
- Nutrient management plans (in addition to conservation plans) required for farmers who obtain State tax credit.

Urban and Rural Growth Areas

- Initially keep as much land in A-1 zoning as possible based on statutory guidance, requiring rezonings only when development proposed.
- Classify lands within Urban Service Areas in A-1 district into either <15 year growth areas or 15+ year growth areas, and rezone <15 year areas away from A-1. Create new "agricultural transition" zoning district with similar rules but no tax credit eligibility for <15 year growth areas.
- For rural hamlets where there is a Town and County approved hamlet expansion plan, zone <15 year planned expansion areas in a zoning district without tax credit eligibility.





"Base" Mapping Categories

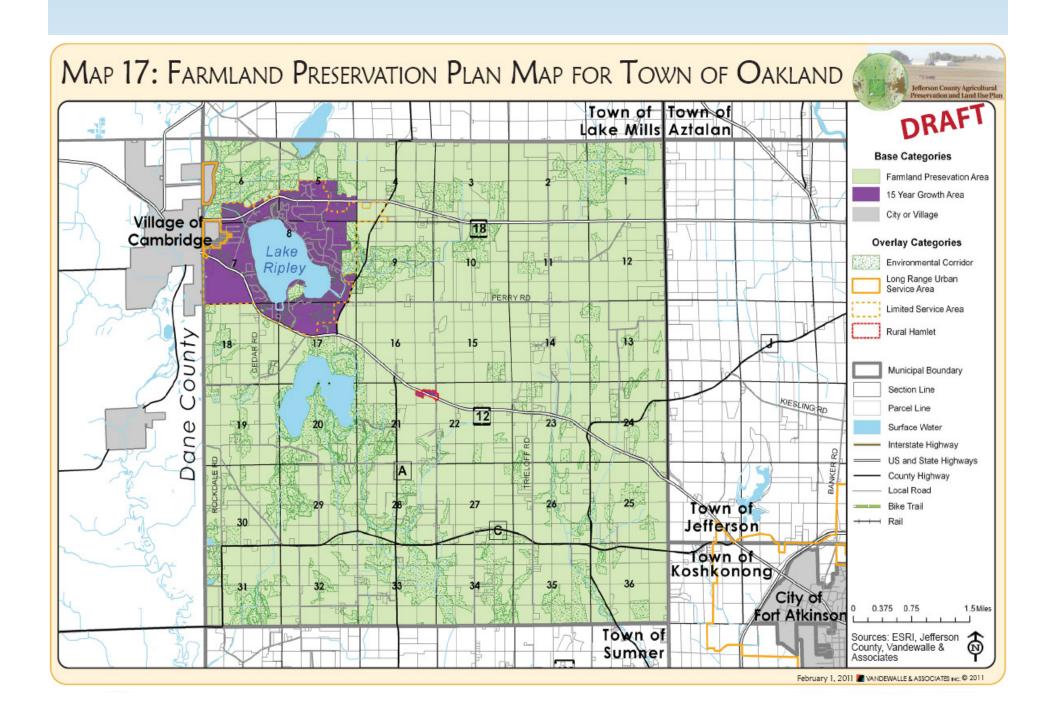
- Agricultural Preservation Area areas planned for farming, open space, and agricultural-related and compatible uses over the next 15+ years
- 15 Year Growth Area areas already developed or planned for development within 15 years, for uses like residential subdivisions, commercial/retail centers, and industrial areas
- **City or Village** incorporated areas not subject to general County zoning regulations and not planned for long-term farmland preservation.

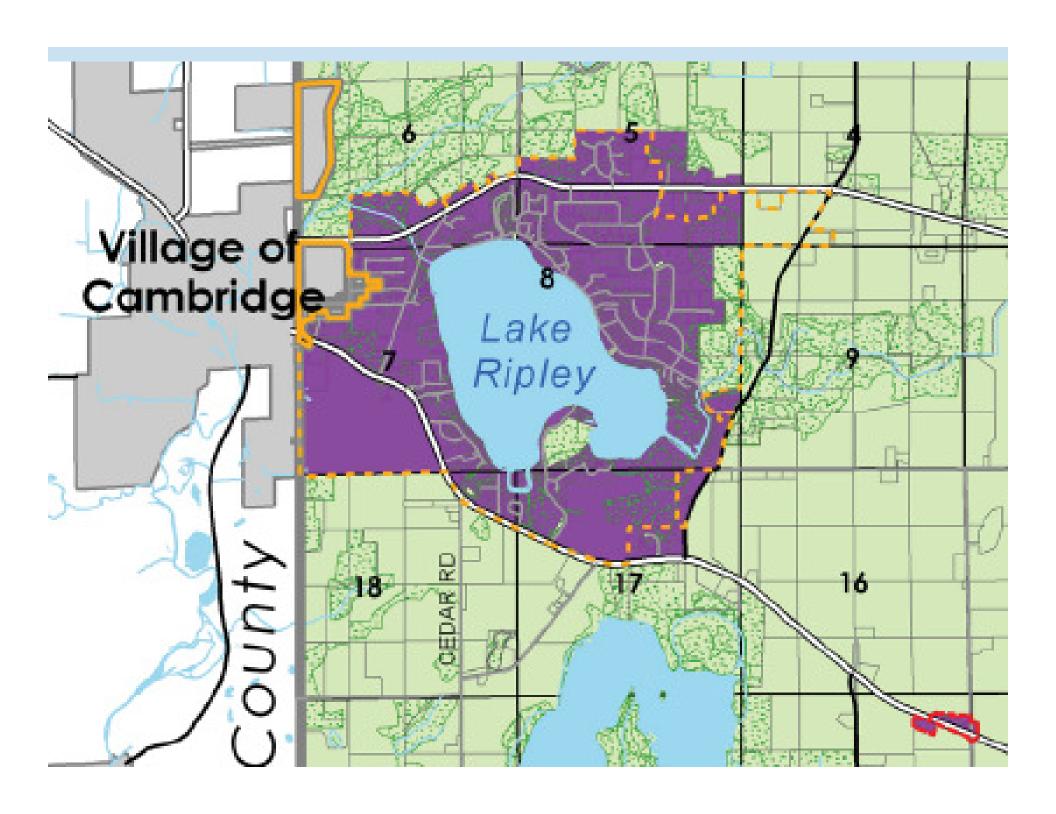


"Overlay" Mapping Categories

- Environmental Corridor Wetlands, floodplain, parks and conservation areas, upland woods over 10 acres, 20%+ slopes
- Long Term Urban Service Area areas around municipalities where a wide range of urban services and utilities are available or planned; boundaries based on post-1999 municipal plans
- Limited Service Area areas around existing rural development where a limited range of public services, always including sanitary sewer service, are available; boundaries follow sanitary districts and town plans for modest expansions
- Rural Hamlet collections of small-scale, usually older buildings in a town, typically with a mix of residential and nonresidential uses without public utilities; boundaries follow 1999 County Plan and local post-1999 plans





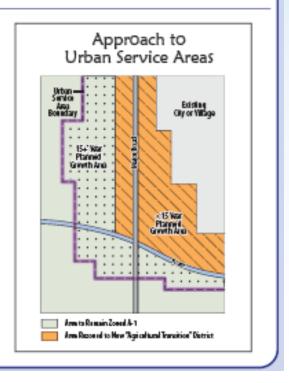


What's New?

15 Year
Growth
Areas and
associated
zoning
changes

Urban and Rural Growth Areas

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- Classify lands within Urban Service Areas in A-1 district into either <15 year growth areas or 15+ year growth areas, and rezone <15 year areas away from A-1. Create new "agricultural transition" zoning district with similar rules but no tax credit eligibility for <15 year growth areas.
- For rural hamlets where there is a Town and County approved hamlet expansion plan, zone <15 year planned expansion areas in a zoning district without tax credit eligibility.





What's New?

- Support for any stricter policies in adopted Town plans
- Policies for AEAs and PACE
- Expanded policies/advice for "Limited Service Areas" and "City or Village Areas"
- Treatment of older houses divided for farm consolidations

Approach to Older Houses via Farm Consolidation Morte Cessolitation Owner A Owner B Owner B Owner B

- Retain prior farm consolidation lots in A-1 zoning (with no conversion fee).
- Allow 1-5 acre land divisions for residences built before January 15, 1975 by requiring a rezoning to A-3 and payment of conversion fee. Does not count against maximum 1-3 splits as indicated above.



Key Zoning Recommendations

- Maintain as much flexibility for older farm residences in A-1 district as possible
- Update A-1 Exclusive Agricultural district text for certification as "farmland preservation" district
- Modify N Natural Resource district as little as possible to enable as second "certified" district
- Create new transitional agricultural zoning district for mapping in 15 Year Growth Areas; same text as old A-1 district?



Next Steps

- Towns asked to provide input by Committee's March 9th meeting, if possible
- Committee provides guidance on Plan revisions at its March and possibly April meetings
- Consultant prepares second draft of updated Agricultural Preservation and Land Use Plan
- Consultant prepares first draft of Zoning
 Ordinance and Map amendments ASAP



Initial Feedback

- What are your questions or concerns Draft Plan?
- What, if any, revisions ought to be considered?
- What additional details should be in the updated Plan?



Thank You for Participating!

